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Religious Miscellany.

A Christian's Creed.

I believe in dreams of duty,
Warning where they can't control,
Fragments of the glorious beauty,
That once filled 'unfain's' souls,
In the godlike wear of nature,
Sin did in the sinner leave,
That may still regain the stature
It hath fa'n from—I believe.

I believe in human kindness,
Loving and the sons of men,
Noble far in willing blindness,
That in censure's keenest ken;
In the gentleness that only
Sanctions what would others grieve,
In the trust that deep and holy,
Hopeth all things—I believe.

I believe in self denial,
And its secret thro' of joy;
In the love that lives through trial,
Dying not, though death destroy;
In those fond and full believings,
That, though all the world deceive,
Will not let its dark deceivings
Wake suspicion—I believe.

I believe in man's affection,
Tender, true, unselfish, high,
Infancy's almost perfection,
And in woman's purity;
In his lonely soul-sustaining
That ease to our purpose cleave,
In her gentle uncomplaining
Peace and patience—I believe.

I believe in self-dedication,
The long sacrifice of years,
Noblest fruits of deep emotion,
Man's blood-pledging, woman's tears;
In its pure presiding passion,
Human hearts by God conceived,
And, despite the world's cold fashion,
Live and die for—I believe.

I believe in human weakness,
Tying to be strong and true,
Owing in impassioned madness,
What would, but could not do;
In its consciousness of failing,
Which the least it doth perceive,
Doth the more leave unavailing
All its efforts—I believe.

I believe in Love reigning,
All that sin hath swept away,
Leaves-like its word pursuing,
Night by night and day by day;
In the power of its remoulding,
In the grace of its retrieve,
In the glory of beholding
Its perfection—I believe.

I believe in Love Eternal,
Fixed in God's unchanging will,
That breaths the deep internal
Hath a depth that's deeper still.
In its patience and endurance
To forbear, and to retrieve,
In the large and full assurance
Of its triumph—I believe.

The Spirit of Praise.

BY A DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF MUSIC.
You are accustomed to sing the songs of Zion? Delightful employment! It is the occupation of angels and glorified spirits in the temple above. Prayer and the ministration of the word will cease with the termination of earthly things; but praise will endure for ever. The blessed ones on high are never weary of praising. Their harps are always rung, and their voices for ever in tune. The soft echoes of their ministry have come down to us, that we might learn to emulate their strains, and begin on earth the everlasting song.

But do you enter into the true spirit of praise? The manner of song has indeed its claims. There must be melody and harmony and time; there must be a verbal utterance which is distinct and impressive; yet if there is nothing more, our songs will be deprived of their choicest influences.

But perhaps you go a step further. You delight in the exercise of praise, and your feelings are often deeply interested. This is well. There is much in the commingling of harmonious voices which is adapted to call forth the sweet sympathies of our nature. The pleasures of taste are very properly allowed to mingle with the fervor of devotion; but the danger is, that they will be substituted for it.

You advance perhaps an additional step. You carefully notice the sentiments of the psalm or hymn you are singing, and endeavor to give them an effective utterance. This also is well. Strictly speaking, there can be no good singing without it. So much as this is expected of the vocalist even at the oratorio and at the secular concert.

But the most important point remains yet to be considered. Do you enter into the spirit of religious song as in the presence of the heart-searching God? To do the former is comparatively easy. Even the infidel may become a successful personator of devotion. He can assume the sentimentalist in a religion which despises, just as he may give the appearance of reality to the fictions of the drama. Emotions of this class are easily excited, and are liable to be misinterpreted.

The true worship of God is a much higher exercise. You speak in the eloquence of song, in the midst of a worshipping assembly, yet you love to listen to your language, and to gather heavenly fragrance from your breathing accents; but do you intend to be responsible individually, for what you are uttering? When the hymn for which you are feeling the responsibility of a religious teacher? When it is hortatory, do you really desire that there may be among the listeners an increase of practical godliness? When you say, "Praise God, O his holiness," do you take delight in that attribute of the divine nature? When you say, "Lord search my heart, and try my ways," do you really desire that he may search and try you? When you utter the language of contri-

tion, faith, hope, love, joy, do you really repeat of sin, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, hope in God, and exercise supreme love to him? If you can truly answer such questions as these in the affirmative, your lot is among the favored ones; you know the privilege of those who have commenced the undying song. Sing on through your earthly pilgrimage with holy delight; in the sweetest notes you have can raise will prove but a faint prelude to the raptures which truth compels to reveal; but if, on the contrary, truth compels a negative reply, it is not too painfully manifest, that with all your pleasing sentimentalities, you know not the peculiar privileges of the holy office of praise? Continuing thus, of your songs, however delightful to yourself and to others, must at last give place to interminable wallings.

Let us now know that even the Christian is not always on the mount of privilege. He is often in darkness and doubt, troubled with conflicting emotions; while his affections seem languid, and his sensible comforts few and feeble. He scarcely knows at such times "what he should pray for," or how he should give thanks. Still there is a wide difference between him and the mere sentimentalist. The one has at least the willing mind—the *desires* to exercise right affections, and is sometimes triumphing over some high mountains, these rendering themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun; while the other is shivering and shuddering in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, between them and me I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain.

Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, to get into the very midst of them, and these comfort myself with the best of their own.

About this wall I went again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time.

At last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I might pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, until I was well nigh quite bent with trying. At last, with great striving, I at first did get my head in, and after that, by a sidelong straining, my shoulders and my whole body. I was exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

Now this mountain and wall were thus made out to me. The mountain signified the church of the living God, the sun that shone thereon, the comfortable shining of his merciful face on them that were therein; the wall, I thought was the wall that did make separation between Christians and the world; and the gap that was in the wall, I thought was Jesus Christ, who is the way to the Father;—and as the passage was wonderful narrow, it showed that none could enter into life but those that were in downward earnest; for here was only room for body and soul, but not for body and soul and sin.

Work for Christ! This is the best cure for a spiritual invalid in the Church. Hard work cures dyspepsia. Like bracing walk of a mile or two, or a few hours of steady work, or wood-sawing, to insure a good appetite, so is a hearty devotion to religious duty, the best quickener of hunger after God. Work develops a man's spiritual proportions. Lazy Church members grow puny and spindling, like some weak-curved boys who are brought up in perfect idleness. Work makes a Christian sinewy and carry burdens, broad-shouldered to bear responsibilities, strong-voiced to sing God's praise, quick-footed to do good, and beautiful in the pulse-beat of piety. I never knew a thorough worker for Christ to be troubled with serious doubts about religion, or to be afflicted with "blue devils" of spiritual despondency. I seldom have known of a good worker giving his pastor the heart ache, or making trouble in the church. I never knew a warm-hearted worker to freeze up a prayer-meeting. I am never afraid to offer such a man a subscription paper. It is lazy professors, the people who ride on the cushioned seats of the Church, and mistake that orthodox luxury for a personal advance in grace—these are the people who are the trouble and torment of themselves and of their minister. It is easier to be the pastor of a thousand workers than of ten drones. The sight of a dying Church, or even a dull one, wears harder on a pastor than the most arduous task for a living and growing Church. It is not what we do, but what we fail to do, that wears us out.—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler.*

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all these to pull against it, yet what a steady grip it is!
Clasp to Jesus. So he died, yet we shall remember him. Did Jesus ever shake off a poor dying sinner that clung to Him? How it would sound to suggest such a thing in heaven! I am missing there that died with Jesus own hand in its grasp! They would count the very faint apostasy, and look with horror upon who ever might offer it. No; we need not, for those who have died thus. Death has separated them from us, but it has not relaxed their grasp upon Christ's undying faithfulness and love. They are where we shall soon overtake them, if we have the same resource for the last hour.

And if this faith that clings, that will not let go, can do such wonders in a dying man, what might it not do if we should but prove it in the full vigor of our powers!—*The Evangelist.*

Gap in the Wall.
FOR THE OLD AND YOUNG.
About this time (says John Bunyan the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*), the state and happiness of the poor Christian people at Bedford came to me.

I saw as if there were on the sunny side of some high mountains, these rendering themselves with the pleasant beams of the sun; while I was shivering and shuddering in the cold, afflicted with frost, snow, and dark clouds. Methought also, between them and me I saw a wall that did compass about this mountain.

Now through this wall my soul did greatly desire to pass, to get into the very midst of them, and these comfort myself with the best of their own.

About this wall I went again and again, still praying as I went, to see if I could find some way or passage by which I might enter therein; but none could I find for some time.

At last I saw, as it were, a narrow gap, like a little door-way in the wall, through which I might pass. Now the passage being very strait and narrow, I made many efforts to get in, but all in vain, until I was well nigh quite bent with trying. At last, with great striving, I at first did get my head in, and after that, by a sidelong straining, my shoulders and my whole body. I was exceeding glad, and went and sat down in the midst of them, and so was comforted with the light and heat of their sun.

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I had been toiling, and had caught nothing; but at the word of my Master I still set down the net, and now I present to you all brethren who come here to ask for Christian baptism. Their hearts were once dark and hard; but God has shined into their hearts. They have sorrowed for their sins and believed in Jesus; and now they are forgiven. I do not take the glory of this great change. The omnipotent God has done it. How can we from stones raise up children unto Abraham can alone do it. But I am greatly encouraged to go on labouring for Him, trusting that He will send His Holy Spirit with His preached word.

It is very difficult to change old established opinions. My countrymen have been accustomed all their lives to worship idols and dead men; and they think it a hard saying when I tell them to turn from these vanities to serve the living God, and that God will punish them everlastingly if they continue in their evil ways. As it was in the days of our Lord so it is now. Some seed falls by the wayside, some on stony ground, and some on the good soil. May the Lord prepare the hearts of my countrymen to receive the Word, may multitudes hear and receive and bring forth fruit abundantly, to the glory of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Han Yan Toi, (Jacob), in the District of Hoi Pong, province of Canton, briefly states how he has been led to believe the Christian religion.

"I am thirty nine years of age. When I was a boy I was about five years at school, after which I became a merchant and tried to gain money, but the insurrection about fifteen years ago spoiled my trade, and made it dangerous to remain; so I came to this country about eleven years since to dig gold, intending to return. I first heard the truth preached by Leong-Tong, but did not see him, because at that time he was getting home. But a charge soon came down that did not permit me to proceed long. At this time about one-and-a-half years ago, Leong-Tong came to see me, and comforted me, although at this time I could get but little gold, for I was not yet a true believer. I was undecided, driven about, and tossed like a plant in the water which the wind troubles. I was like this for two months; but Leong-Tong often came to see me. Last June I dug gold with an Englishman, and some dirt fell on me, and nearly broke my leg. Leong-Tong heard of my accident, and came to see me. He exhorted and comforted me, and advised me to repent; telling me that if I did not, when I left this world of woe I should only change it for a worse state. He said my accident was God's rebuke to me, who like a Father intended it for my good; and that though He rebuked me, He loved me, and wished me to turn and repent and accept grace from the world to come. He gave me a tract, "Come to Jesus." I thought all the night about it. I felt I was a great sinner, and might die; and that if I did not repent God would punish me not only now, but in the next world. I was then about thirty years of age, and I determined to repent, and come to Him. Leong-Tong came often and encouraged me, and instructed me further; and on Sundays I went to church. And now I believe in Jesus, and I trust the Holy Spirit is within my heart, and will never depart. Hereafter I will never worship images, only the true God; and I pray that the Holy commandments, which I have with me, may be able to keep me from my evil ways. I lost all I had, and was like a man sinking into the mire, and my house to rise. Leong-Tong came to my house frequently; he instructed me in Christian doctrine, and answered all my objections, and exhorted me with many words. When I first listened to him it was very much against my ear. Afterwards I thought his words were good, and I had a desire to be right. But opinion was a great difficulty, and was like a great chain that kept me back. But Han Yan Toi, who is now with me to ask for baptism, and who even then knew the truth persuaded me to go to church. I heard Leong-Tong preach; and went week after week and month after month. Leong-Tong came to my place once a week, and talks me of the truth of the Lord, and comforts me, and prays with me. I am very thankful that the Holy Ghost has shined in my heart. I feel that my sins are very great, but my opinion smoking and gambling; for my speech, actions, and thoughts are all against God. And then the worship of idols was a very great sin. God might justly cast me out forever; but His mercy is great, and He sent His Son from heaven to save sinners, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. Therefore I will never smoke opium again. I have given both my pipes to Leong-Tong, and I truly repent of my sins, and I trust that the great Holy Ghost may strengthen me, and enable me to hold fast steadfastly unto the end, and in the next life I trust in Christ to save my soul, and bring me to our Father's house. This is my heart's desire."

Kwan Chua Tin, (David), forty-three years of age, a native of the District of Hoi Pong, province of Canton, asks for baptism, and briefly gives his reasons for believing Christian doctrine.

"I had five years' schooling; then I became a farmer. I heard of the gold-fields, and came here about fifteen years ago. I have made at different times about £1000. I was a heathen man; I gambled and smoked opium, and did what was wrong. I had